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Commissioner for Patents

REMARKS

Claims 9-18 and 25 are now in the application.

Claims 9-18 are removed from withdrawal and are thus to be considered in the present response.

Claims 1-8 are withdrawn from the application.

In view of the prior art cited by the Examiner, the Applicant herein removes claim 9-18 from withdrawal. Moreover, claim 25 is herein amended, in view of the withdrawal of claims 1-8 and removal of claims 9-18 from withdrawal, so as to depend on claim 9 rather than claim 1. Formality amendments have been made to claim 25, so as to comply with 35 U.S.C. 112 with regard to antecedent basis and proper dependencies.

With regard to the prior art, the Applicant notes the citation of U.S. Patents No. 2,366,965 (hereinafter "*the Johnson reference*") and No. 4,259,890 (hereinafter "*the Walsh reference*"). The Applicant points out that the Johnson reference is associated with a tubular rivet. Accordingly, the Johnson reference does not have any teaching pertaining to the use of such a tubular rivet with bathtubs and air massage systems. A person skilled in the art would not have been led to the Johnson reference to seek a solution for a problem associated with air massage systems of bathtubs.

Similarly, the Walsh reference is primarily associated with removable anchor assemblies. Accordingly, the Walsh reference does not teach any association with bathtubs and air massage systems.

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In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application is deemed to be in condition for allowance, and early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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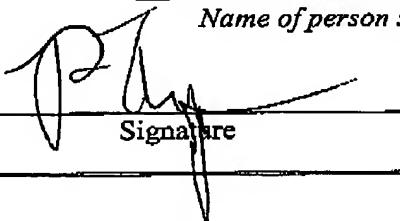
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